

R E M A R K S

Reconsideration of this application, as amended, is respectfully requested.

RE: THE ALLOWABLE SUBJECT MATTER

The Examiner's indication of the allowability of the subject matter of claims 6, 7, 20, 21, 26 and 27 is respectfully acknowledged. These claims, however, have not been rewritten in independent form at this time since, as set forth in detail hereinbelow, it is respectfully submitted that new claims 28-43 recite allowable subject matter.

RE: THE SPECIFICATION

The specification has been amended to correct some minor informalities of which the undersigned has become aware, and to provide proper antecedent basis for the "request" and "usage data" of the present invention as recited in the new claims. No new matter has been added, and it is respectfully requested that the amendments to the specification be approved and entered, and that the objection to the specification be withdrawn.

RE: THE DRAWINGS

Figs. 1 and 2 have been amended to add labels to boxes 11, 12 and 21-26 in accordance with the description in the

specification at page 3, line 25 to page 4, line 12, as required by the Examiner.

Submitted herewith is a corrected sheet of formal drawings which incorporates the amendments and an annotated sheet showing the changes made thereto.

No new matter has been added, and it is respectfully requested that the Examiner's objection to the drawings be withdrawn.

THE CLAIMS

Claims 28-43 have been added based on the subject matter of claims 1, 2, 6, 8-16, 20, 22, 23 and 26, respectively.

New independent method claim 28 (and apparatus claim 38 and computer program claim 41) has been amended to clarify the feature of the present invention whereby the method for provided usage data comprises: (i) accessing through a network the apparatus of the first user and an apparatus of a second user, wherein the apparatus of the first user and the apparatus of the second user are of a same model; and (ii) acquiring information corresponding to the usage data item from the apparatus of the first user and from the apparatus of the second user, as supported by the disclosure in the specification at page 7, lines 4-21.

In addition, independent method claim 28 (and apparatus claim 38 and computer program claim 41) has been amended to clarify the feature of the present invention whereby the apparatus of the first user has a copying function, as supported by the disclosure in the specification at page 5, line 10.

No new matter has been added, and it is respectfully requested that the amendments to the claims be approved and entered.

It is respectfully submitted, moreover, that US Application Publication No. 2001/0051952 ("Nakazato") does not disclose, teach or suggest the feature of the present invention as recited in independent method claim 28 (and apparatus claim 38 and computer program claim 41) whereby (i) the apparatus of the first user and the apparatus of the second user are accessed through the network, wherein the apparatus of the first user and the apparatus of the second user are of the same model; and (ii) information corresponding to the usage data item is acquired from the apparatus of the first user and from the apparatus of the second user.

Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that the present invention as recited in new independent claims 28, 38 and 41, and claims 29-37, 39, 40, 42 and 43 respectively depending therefrom, patentably distinguishes over Nakazato, under 35 USC 102 as well as under 35 USC 103.

Application No. 10/002,771
Response to Office Action

Customer No. 01933

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In view of the foregoing, entry of this Amendment, allowance of the claims and the passing of this application to issue are respectfully solicited.

If the Examiner has any comments, questions, objections or recommendations, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the telephone number given below for prompt action.

Respectfully submitted,



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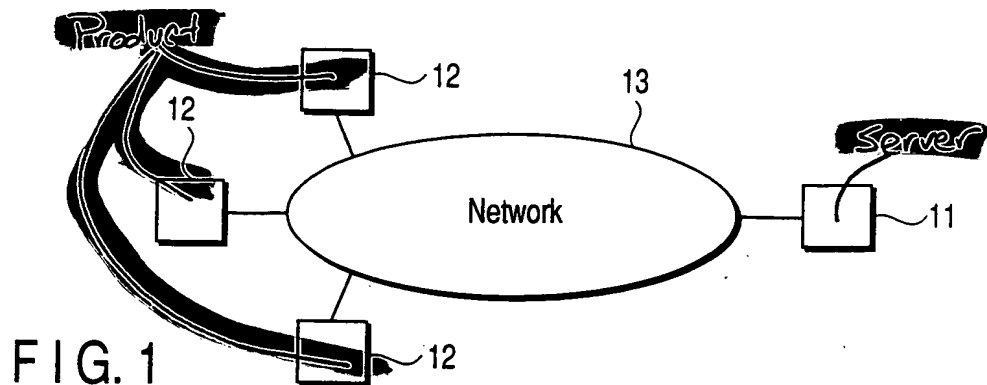


FIG. 1

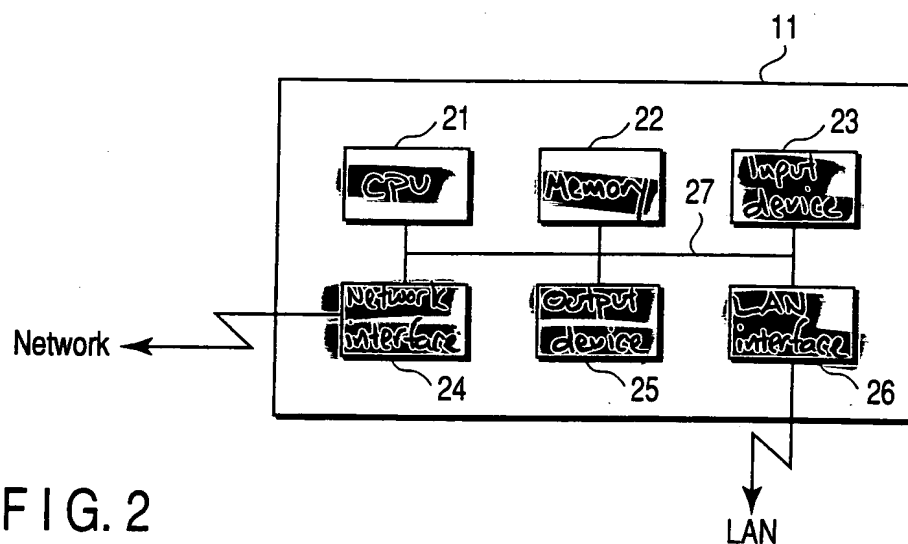


FIG. 2

Claim type \ Backup data	Number of copies	Number of copies in each paper feed stage	Image concentration set value	Exposure set value
A	○	○			
B		○	○		
C	○	○		○	
⋮					

FIG. 4